And there came a day, a day unlike any other, when Earth's mightiest heroes found themselves united against a common threat! On that day, the Avengers were born--to fight the foes no single super hero could withstand! Stan Lee presents…

THE NEW AVENGERS

A massive super-villain riot at the high-tech maximum security prison known as the Raft brings together the heroes who would become the New Avengers—Captain America, Iron Man, Luke Cage, Spider-Man, Spider-Woman, and the mysterious powerhouse known as the Sentry. One member of the hero community who aided in the fight refused to join the newly-formed team—Matt Murdock, known throughout Hell's Kitchen as Daredevil.

When Captain America is given information that the Silver Samurai, one of the Raft's escapees, has returned to Japan, he asks Murdock for help. Murdock's personal problems prevent him from aiding the New Avengers, but he offers the services of a mysterious friend—Ronin.

Cap sends Ronin to infiltrate the Clan Yashida, a family of Japanese Yakuza. Ronin discovers that the Hand—a ritualistic cult of ninjas—along with Silver Samurai's old partner Viper, a.k.a. Madame Hydra, is recruiting the Silver Samurai.

Spider-Woman captures Madame Hydra by herself, but the capture is nothing more than a ruse. Spider-Woman is betraying the Avengers and S.H.I.E.L.D. by selling her services to Hydra and another mystery faction.

Ronin is attacked by an army of Hand assassins and followed back to Tony Stark's Osaka penthouse apartment. The Avengers fight the Hand and eventually take the fight back to the fortress Yashida, only to find themselves faced with the Silver Samurai leading a small army of Hand assassins.

Writer
Brian Michael Bendis

Penciler
David Finch

Inker
Danny Miki

Colorist
Frank D'Armata

Letterers
Richard Starkings & Comicraft's Albert Deschesne

Production
Brad Johansen

Assistant Editors
Molly Lazer & Aubrey Sitterson

Associate Editor
Andy Schmidt

Editor
Tom Brevoort

Editor In Chief
Joe Quesada

Publisher
Dan Buckley

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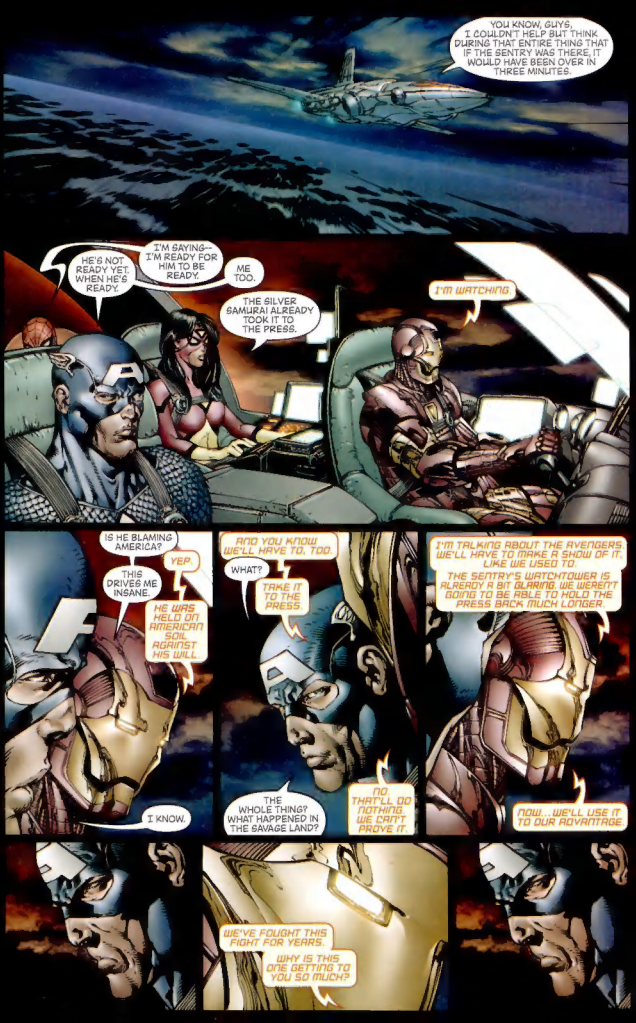
WHAT?
HEY!
THAT'S NOT WHAT WE *CAME HERE FOR!*
MAN, IF WE WOULDN'T'A SHOWED UP IN HIS FACE, HE'D BE WEARING A HYDRA ROBE AND DOIN' THE ROBOT

LUKE, LUKE, LUKE, HARRIOR *WAS* ONE OF THE S.H.I.E.L.D. FILES WE COULDN'T MATCH. HE *WAS* DECLARED DEAD.
FINE. HE'S STILL A PIECE OF GARBAGE--
HE'S--
HE'S SO DEEP IN ALL THIS CRAP OUT HERE...
HE'S NOT LYING ABOUT *THIS*, AND WE CAN'T JUST ARREST HIM. THINGS ARE MORE COMPLICATED THAN--
COMPLICATED?! I GOT TOSSED OUT OF A SKYSCRAPER OVER THIS PIECE OF CRAP!
DIDN'T YOU GO TO PRISON ONCE? ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

ARE YOU THE SAME MAN YOU WERE THEN?

WE CAME HERE TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU WERE GOING TO DO. WHAT HAD HAPPENED--
THAT-- I *GUESS* THAT ALL DEPENDS ON WHY I WAS KIDNAPPED BY YOUR GOVERNMENT.
YOU WERE *NOT* KIDNAPPED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.
THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH *S.H.I.E.L.D.* AND WE'RE TRYING TO PIECE IT TOGETHER QUICKLY.
IT WOULD BE A HUGE HELP IF YOU TOLD US *EXACTLY* WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU.

A MONTH AGO, I WENT TO SLEEP IN MY PRIVATE PLANE AND WOKE UP IN A DARK CELL IN THAT RAFT PRISON.
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I WAS IN NEW YORK UNTIL THE PRISON RIOT.
I GOT THE HELL OUT OF THERE, ONLY TO INSTANTLY BE PICKED UP BY MEMBERS OF THE HAND, WHO TOLD ME THEY WERE JAPANESE SECRET SERVICE FOR PRIME MINISTER JUNICHIRO KOIZUMI ESCORTING ME OUT OF THE COUNTRY.
I WAS BROUGHT HERE, TO MY OWN ANCESTRAL HOME...
...SO THE HAND AND HYDRA COULD TAKE TURNS RUBBING MY BACK--TELLING ME HOW THIS IS WHERE IT WILL ALL START FOR THEM IN THIS NEW WORLD POWER STRUGGLE.
AND NOW HERE YOU ALL ARE.
HI, JESSICA.
HYDRA AND THE HAND TOGETHER?
MADAME HYDRA THERE SAID S.H.I.E.L.D. IS ROTTEN AND SO IS HYDRA. IS SHE RIGHT?
LIKE THE MAN SAID--WE'RE STILL PUTTING IT TOGETHER.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO HERE, HARADA?
MY HAND WAS FORCED HERE.
I'M GOING TO NEED TO TAKE MY HOUSE BACK AND PUT SOME SORT OF SPOTLIGHT ON MYSELF TO KEEP MYSELF SAFE.
YOU TELL YOUR MASTERS THAT I'M GOING TO TELL THE WORLD WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME HERE.
AND YOU TELL THEM THAT THE ONLY THING KEEPING ME FROM TURNING THIS HOUSE INTO SOMETHING FOR THEM TO TRULY FEAR IS MY FATHER'S NAME ON THE DOOR.
BUT IF YOUR COUNTRY COMES NEAR ME AGAIN...
IT'S NOT OUR COUNTRY.


YOU KNOW, GUYS, I COULDN'T HELP BUT THINK DURING THAT ENTIRE THING THAT IF THE SENTRY WAS THERE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN OVER IN THREE MINUTES.
I'M SAYING— I'M READY FOR HIM TO BE READY.
HE'S NOT READY YET. WHEN! HE'S READY.
ME TOO.
THE SILVER SAMURAI ALREADY TOOK IT TO THE PRESS.
I'M WATCHING.
IS HE BLAMING AMERICA?
YEP.
THIS DRIVES ME INSANE.
HE WAS HELD ON AMERICAN SOIL AGAINST HIS WILL.
I KNOW.
AND YOU KNOW WE'LL HAVE TO, TOO.
WHAT?
TAKE IT TO THE PRESS
THE WHOLE THING? WHAT HAPPENED IN THE SAVAGE LAND?
NO. THAT'LL DO NOTHING. WE CAN'T PROVE IT.
I'M TALKING ABOUT THE AVENGERS. WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE A SHOW OF IT. LIKE WE USED TO.
THE SENTRY'S WATCHTOWER IS ALREADY A BIT GLARING. WE WON'T BE GOING TO BE ABLE TO HOLD THE PRESS BACK MUCH LONGER.
NOW... WE'LL USE IT TO OUR ADVANTAGE.
WE'VE FOUGHT THIS FIGHT FOR YEARS.
WHY IS THIS ONE GETTING TO YOU SO MUCH?

CAPTAIN, I'M TRULY SORRY THIS WENT SO BADLY.
YOU DID NOTHING WRONG.
JUST SO YOU KNOW--I'LL BE GOING BACK TO JAPAN TO MAKE SURE HARADA DOESN'T BUCKLE UNDER THE PRESSURE.
HE HAS IN THE PAST.
I HEAR ELEKTRA NACHIOS IS RUNNING THE HAND NOW. SHE WILL COME LOOKING FOR HER MEN.
OR FOR REVENGE.
MY SENSEI USED TO SAY THAT THE WAR BETWEEN THE HAND AND THE YASHIDA GOES BACK CENTURIES AND THAT IT WOULDN'T END IN OUR LIFETIME.
BUT I DON'T THINK THAT'S TRUE. IT HAS TO END.
PLUS, I MADE YOU AND MURDOCK A PROMISE, CAPTAIN, THAT I HAVE NOT LIVED UP TO.
BEFORE HE DIED--A FRIEND OF OURS SAID THAT THE AVENGERS NEVER FOLLOWED THROUGH ON THINGS--
WE ALWAYS JUMPED FROM ONE DRAMA TO THE NEXT--IT'S JUST THE NATURE OF THIS KIND OF TEAM.
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT WHAT HE SAID A LOT. WE DO NEED TO FOLLOW THIS UP.
HEY. IF YOU'RE WILLING TO DO ALL THIS--I'LL FUND IT.
IF YOU NEED THE TEAM--AND YOU WILL--YOU CALL US. IF YOU NEED TO PUT TOGETHER ANOTHER TEAM--
DO YOU NEED FINANCING?
I DON'T NEED MONEY. I HAVE PLENTY.
HOW DID YOU KNOW HOW TO FLY A QUINJET THAT I DESIGNED AND NEVER SHOWED TO ANYONE ELSE IN THE ENTIRE WORLD?
HE WANTS TO KNOW HOW YOU FLEW THE QUINJET.
I SAW IRON MAN FLY IT.
YOU SAW ME FLY IT.
THAT'S WHAT I DO. IF I SEE SOMEONE DO SOMETHING--I CAN DO IT TOO.
I DIDN'T REALIZE YOUR INTENSE FEELINGS ABOUT JAPAN WHEN WE INITIALLY DISCUSSED IT--
ARE YOU REALLY WILLING TO GO THE DISTANCE WITH US ON THIS?
WHO IS THIS?
HE WANTS TO KNOW WHO YOU ARE.